

The Iron Pot—Still a Mystery

By a Former Secret Service Man

Ex-Operative Tells of Cleverest of Counterfeiting Plots



"IT WAS THE VESSEL WHICH HUNG OVER THE FIRE WHEN I VISITED THE COUNTERFEITERS."

"THERE are few mysteries which are never cleared up," commenced Capt. Dickson, as he sat before the cheerful wood fire of his cozy study one night last winter. "Although some of them slumber for years among the things forgotten, until the denouement is accidentally developed by some person who, perhaps, never heard of the original matter. Such was the case which I have come to remember as that of 'The Iron Pot.' It was a vessel of this humble character that finally cleared up a great mystery and brought the guilty to justice.

"You are well aware that the silver dollar passes current for something like 49 or 50 cents more than the actual silver in it is worth. This fact has not been overlooked by counterfeiters, and because of it the secret service has had some knotty problems to unravel.

"The largest percentage of counterfeiters of specie are crude, black, leaden things that are readily detectable and difficult to pass. The handling of these coins is beset with excessive danger. But there have been some cases where counterfeiters have so perfectly imitated the silver dollar that experts have been deceived by it. Such a coin was brought out by a gang operating in St. Louis some years ago. Their dollar was of the same fineness and weight as the coin of the government's mint and had the same quantity of alloy. The only difference between the two was that the spurious coin was a shade thicker than the genuine, which fact was due to the machinery of the counterfeiters being somewhat lighter and less powerful than that of the federal mints.

"The popular idea that coins are cast or molded is quite erroneous. They are stamped or pressed out of narrow strips of metal. It is only by this means that they can be sufficiently compressed to stand the wear to which they are subjected in circulation. The machines used for this purpose are heavy, ponderous things, and it is difficult for counterfeiters to secure the manufacture of such a machine, and quite as hard a proposition for them to find a suitably secret place in which to operate it, once they have got it made.

"The St. Louis gang had their plant in a cleverly constructed cave in a suburban district. It was an artificial cave, dug back in the face of a clay and gravel bluff. The entrance was through the shanty of a poor Irish family, a circumstance that diverted suspicion from it and one to which in part due the long immunity the gang enjoyed.

"There was no scrap of metal, no coins, chemicals, or other thing used in the art. Only the machine and a few wrenches and similar tools. The gang had skipped out. The Irishman was half-witted, and his wife was too clever to be caught in the trap we laid for her. We had made a water-haul, except for the machine, which was destroyed. The cave was filled up. Acting under orders from Wash-

ington we maintained secrecy about the entire matter and nothing of it got into the newspapers.

"I found one thing in the shanty which might or might not offer a clue to the counterfeiters. It was an empty envelope bearing the postmark of an obscure railroad station in the sunken district of northeastern Arkansas. I had long ago learned that it is the seemingly insignificant things that lead to the discovery of criminals, and while this envelope might mean nothing, on the other hand, it might be of the gravest importance. It had been found beneath the sheet of metal on which the cook stove stood, the tip of one corner, discolored and grimy, attracting my attention. I had secured it and pocketed it without attracting attention.

"If the gang had never existed it could not have disappeared so effectually. We were face to face with a blank wall. This made us the more anxious to capture the counterfeiters. As nothing better offered, the chief suggested that I follow up the clue of the empty envelope.

"With as cumbersome and complete an outfit as every city sportsman carries into the woods with him, I left the train one day at the waydote station which bore the name of the postmark. Securing a guide and cook, in the person of a lanky native, I had my truck hauled out to the St. Francis river, only two miles distant, where I pitched camp and made preparations for an indefinite stay.

"It was the greatest game country I have ever seen. There were deer without limit and a good sprinkling of turkeys, some bears, and water fowl of every kind, until the killing of them lost much of its charm, and became more like ruthless slaughter.

"I had a plentiful supply of liquors and cigars, a fact my guide lost no time in spreading broadcast about the country. This was just what I wanted him to do, for it brought the natives flocking to my camp to partake of the liquors and cigars which I distributed with a lavish hand. It gave me the opportunity for which I was playing.

"By making inquiry of my visitors, I learned that about five miles down the river were camped, in a snug cabin built by themselves, three gentlemen from parts unknown. They maintained the place as a sort of club and had spent the spring season there. They left about March and were gone until October, when they returned one night and again took possession of their cabin. Our raid on the cave had been made on the 15th of October, and this caused me to think that perhaps the empty envelope was making good.

"As the three gentlemen did not deign to visit my camp, I decided to make a call upon them.

"I started out in a folding canvas canoe, late in the afternoon, and arrived in the vicinity of their camp just at nightfall. With a sharp cypress tree, aided by a jagged cut from my hunting knife, I succeeded in punching a bad hole in the bottom of the canoe, and with the boat rapidly filling with water, I landed just after sunset at the very door of their cabin. The three men were at home and they welcomed

Captain Dickson relates tale—He tells of encountering Desperado Gang and the Ultimate Consequences—Man with Bulldog Jaw and His Daring Escape from the Grip of the Law.

village, and although I worked the single telegraph wire to its utmost capacity, the three men succeeded in making their escape.

"Sending a full cipher report to Washington, I repaired to the cabin in the swamps and made a careful search of it. Everything within was in the greatest confusion. Clothing and shells, guns and fishing-tackle were strewn about the floor, evidencing a precipitate departure. It was tantalizing to again allow the criminals to escape. I felt deeply chagrined, and resolved never again to put off a matter of this kind. The men had forestalled me by only a few hours, for I had intended arresting them that morning, and there had been nothing in their conduct during my visit to their cabin to indicate that they thought of flight.

"In one corner of the cabin, beneath the very bunk on which I had slept, there was an excavation three feet square and as many deep. The cover was down and dirt was strewn over it which gave it the same appearance as the dirt floor of the house. I discovered it by a hollow sound when I tapped over the spot. It was empty.

"I noticed the absence of the pot, which had supplied my supper, but it was rather a subconscious notice of it. The fact really made no appreciable impression on me at the time, nor did it, in fact, until more than a year had passed. It was then recalled by a newspaper dispatch under date of the small village.

"Some of the boys in the village had appropriated the cabin as a sort of clubhouse, after the three men had fled. They would spend Saturdays there, fishing and swimming and hunting. Immediately in front of the cabin was a steep bank, and the river widened out into a broad, deep pool which afforded good fishing and swimming. The boys would throw white pebbles into this hole and dive for them from the bank. One of them had struck his head against something hard at the bottom of the river and had been pulled up a corpse, his skull having been fractured by the impact of the blow.

"The others investigated and found a large iron pot half buried in the soft mud. Its cover was sealed down and its weight had been so great the boys couldn't lift it from its oozy bed. The dispatch stated that the pot was to be raised and its contents examined.

"I was in Little Rock when I read this dispatch and, without waiting for instructions from headquarters, I boarded the first train and set out for the village. I was in a state of feverish excitement, fearing I would arrive there after the pot had been secured. I wanted to be the first to view its contents. I felt sure I knew what was in it.

"After a journey that seemed interminable I arrived at the village and inquired about the pot. My fears had been groundless. With the indifference so characteristic in country people the villagers had forgotten, after the funeral of the unfortunate young man, the incident of the pot. While there had been some talk of raising it, no one had taken the lead, and there the matter had rested.

"Securing a team of mules and some strong ropes and chains, I drove out to the cabin. By dint of much diving I succeeded in fastening the chains about the pot and had my assistant drag it out upon the bank. It was the vessel which had hung over the fire when I had visited the counterfeiters in their lair. Then I remembered the hut after their departure. It was sealed with paraffin and sealing wax, and not a drop of water had passed the lid.

"I contained a complete set of engravers' tools, several bottles of powerful acids, glass stopped and sealed, a number of bars of silver, some three hundred odd counterfeit silver dollars, and the dies with which they had been stamped out. The dies were thickly coated with wax and were as bright and fresh as when they beat out the false coins in the secret cave.

"After swearing my assistant to secrecy, I returned to headquarters with my booty.

"Not many weeks later two of the men were captured. I had given the department a minute description of them, after their unceremonious departure, and its vast machinery had been set in motion for their apprehension. It is a maxim of the service that a man once a counterfeiter is always a counterfeiter. This rule held good with reference to two of the men, at least, for they were captured and convicted of another job. The incidents I have just related were not introduced in evidence against them and consequently escaped the press.

"The man with the bulldog jaw escaped completely at that time, but I met with him, years after, under circumstances neither of us will forget so long as we live."

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Practical Labor.

"George," spoke his better half, "you are interested in the temperance movements, are you not?" "Why, certainly I am," he answered. "Well, suppose you go out and make a few of them with the pump handle. I am in need of a pall of water right away."

FROM THE HOUSEKEEPER'S NOTEBOOK

Ingenious Arrangements for Small Apartments.

(Copyright, by Joseph B. Bowles.)

Many persons live in small quarters from choice. Others do so from necessity. The business woman chooses them for every motion counts in strength and the time required to do her housework. In cold sections of the country, they help solve the question of heat. It is a fact that compactness saves time, expense, and many steps in the course of a day. Though we may, sub rosa, long for the spacious rooms and large houses considered necessary by our forefathers, reason tells us that many and large rooms make more work.

Many devices have been adopted to aid the housekeeper who must live in compact quarters. Among them is a bed which pulls out of the wall and can be pushed back when not in use. Generally, it runs back into a closet, the floor of which is raised to the height of the bed. In this way it is completely out of sight and takes no room in the day time. Ventilation is secured by openings which let in the air in various places. People who have tried this bed consider it practical and sanitary. The clothes are placed in a chest during the daytime and this also serves as a seat.

Another labor-saving device is the kitchenette. This is a small room, usually six feet by four feet, much resembling a closet and built in the apartment, where it is desired, to go without a kitchen and the sitting room is used for a dining room. This kitchenette holds a small gas stove, usually two burners, a tiny sink, and a small refrigerator. The walls behind these are lined with shelves and closets to hold dishes. It is remarkable how much cooking can be done in these small rooms. Some "cliff dwellers" got their three meals in them, and they are primarily intended for persons who wish to cook their own breakfasts and luncheons and go out for dinner. These kitchenettes are usually found in apartments consisting of two rooms and a bath.

Life in apartments simplifies housekeeping in many of its forms. Stairs do not have to be climbed, rooms are few and consequent work lessened, but the servant problem still remains in some modified form and new problems arise in place of the old. To meet the demands of the modern tenant all kinds of apartments are erected with aids like the kitchenette, some practical and others not. So far as known no such absurdity as a stove which serves as a folding bed has been invented, but many ingenious devices have been placed upon the market, among them a set of springs which can be placed over the bathtub at night, and made to serve as a bed. Some inventions are not to be adopted for sanitary reasons, others are worthy of consideration. Many of these fixtures and appliances that relieve housework of much of its drudgery have been patented, others are not and can be tried anywhere.

It may surprise many to know that some of the most novel inventions in the way of reducing living space to a minimum, and at the same time plan the apartments so they are comfortable and in many cases luxurious, come from California. The latest fashions in the best apartments are so novel and sensible that they deserve wide attention. A handsome new apartment consists of parlor, living room, kitchen, private hall, private bath and storage closet. As space is desirable, the parlor and living room are made to serve a double and triple purpose. The parlor is both parlor and bedroom, and the living room is in turn dining room, bedroom and sitting room. So unique are the arrangements that when used for one purpose there is no indication of their having ever been put to another use. Waste room in every form is avoided, and doors, mantels and other architectural features are arranged so they can be converted into a double feature.

Off from the living room and connected with it by doors, which not only separate the rooms but are useful in other ways, is a tiny kitchen. This is complete and arranged so that an ample meal can be provided in a short time. The sink has an attachment whereby the holes in the drain can be

closed, thus making a pan which can be used for dishwashing. Other patents simplify work in a similar manner. Undoubtedly the most unique features are the uses to which the doors are put. On the inside of one of the doors opening into the kitchen, a gas stove is hung, on the other side is suspended a dining table top, four by six feet in size. The small center table in the sitting room is wheeled to this top, fastened to it by means of clamps and returned to the middle of the floor. This makes a dining table for six persons. This convenience is eclipsed by the wonders of the other door, for this swings on a central pivot so that the stove, with gas still burning, can be turned into the dining room and used as a hot buffet to warm dishes during a meal. Thus the occupants of this unique apartment have living room, kitchen and dining room provided in a simple, up-to-date manner, and few steps are required to accomplish the work which is reduced to a minimum.

A pretty feature in these same flats is a combination book case and writing desk. This is stationed to the left of the mantel. To all appearances this is the only object but it serves another purpose as well, for it is also a door which leads into the storage closet. This closet is arranged to hold the bed clothes as well as wearing apparel. The bed itself is in the daytime a handsome mantel. A spring attached to the top shelf of this mantel jets down the front to form a bed when desired. This turning of the mantel into a bed is a sanitary arrangement for the back of the bed opens into a well ventilated closet. Clamps are fastened to the four corners of the bed to hold the clothes. When the bed is turned up in the day time these clamps keep the clothes suspended, and as there is a space of an inch and a half between the various cribs the air can circulate freely all day. Nor are these all the Aladdin wonders, for the large cheval glass in the parlor, like the mantel in the sitting room, serves a double purpose and turns down to furnish a full sized bed with sanitary conditions like the other.

Here, then, are living room, parlor, two sleeping rooms, kitchen, bath room and reception hall, with practically nothing but two rooms to care for. In some of the new apartments where added room is needed, a venetian blind is suspended from the ceiling so that it cuts the room in half. This can be rolled up to the top of the room in the daytime and at night it forms a protection so that the room is divided into two and thus gives opportunity for an extra couch. In other apartments screens are fitted on the reverse side to hold extra clothing. A new patent of this kind consists of a screen with hooks on the back which are concealed when hung with clothing, by canvas covered doors. Dress boxes are utilized for seats in the daytime and beds at night in other apartments.

Many of these plans to minimize space and economize labor are worthy of consideration. Space in the kitchen can always be saved by using a kitchen cabinet arranged to hold cooking and eating utensils. The best of these cabinets are costly and an old book case can be converted into one at small expense. The newest kitchen table is made with the molding board under the drawer which holds knives, forks, spoons and enough dishes for a meal. The board slides under and can be pulled out when needed. Hooks are placed at intervals down the legs of the table to hold pans and cooking utensils that must be hung up. In one small apartment where there was no kitchen the housekeeper had a stand made the right height for washing dishes. A large hole in the top allowed the dish pan to be inserted and a perforated piece of tin the exact size of the bottom of the pan made a false bottom which prevented particles from settling in the pan. The water in this way was free enough from sediment to throw down the bathroom escape pipes. The cooking utensils were hung on hooks around the legs of this impromptu sink.

How much can be accomplished in small quarters if the housekeeper has ingenuity and is on the alert for new ideas! One of the latest inventions for apartments of small space is the sectional chiffonier. It is really a drawer containing two boxes over which another drawer the exact counterpart fits. A detachable mirror rests on top, and the whole is an attractive and serviceable piece of furniture to hold clothing or anything one desires. When more seats are needed in the room, the two sections can be taken apart, the mirror placed out of the way, and the top and bottom sections make seats against the wall. In this way there are seats for four guests who never imagine they are sitting on what was once a chiffonier.

In Justice To Xanthippe.

To speak ill of one who is dead and cannot defend him or herself is generally conceded to be a disgraceful deed. Yet from generation to generation this has been done in the case of Mrs. Socrates (nee Xanthippe), says Katherine Smith, who undertakes a defense of that much-abused lady in the Smart Set.

Xanthippe's parents were poor but proud when Socrates sought her hand in marriage. She began life hampered by many drawbacks. There was her name, long, and beginning with that rarely heard consonant, X. She was the youngest of a noble family, and the rest of the alphabet had been exhausted in providing for her 23 brothers and sisters.

What could be her endearing nickname? Was it Xannie? Could it be Thippie? Not at all. The modest, shrinking child grew up to womanhood as Xanthippe, lived as Xanthippe, died as Xanthippe. Centuries after her death the word is used to illustrate the alphabet as one of the few words beginning with the mellifluous, but seldom encountered, letter X. She has, at least, that individuality, poor woman.

Socrates was an old man when he married, and far from a beauty. Xanthippe, much younger, would probably have taken pride in the comeliness of a husband, but Socrates went

for the most part barefoot, was ungainly and dressed poorly. That his wife was of tender heart is evinced by her naming her first child Lamproclea. It will be seen that her object was to find a name capable of a pretty and endearing diminutive. Here was a woman who, even if she felt inclined to use an endearing name toward her fat-nosed, thick-lipped husband, would be obliged to call him Soc or Ratty. Is it any wonder then that she longed for some euphonious nickname for her first-born? Lammie it was, but tradition hath it that this petted and spoiled son repaid Mrs. Xanthippe's kindness by saying that though she had been a good mother to him—"did not kick him, did not bite him—yet her tongue was worse than her teeth."

High Praise for Maeterlinck. Maurice Maeterlinck, who, it is announced, is to receive the Nobel prize for literature this year, has been called "the Belgian Shakespeare"—a title he is by no means averse from holding. As he is now only 46, it is probable that he has not yet given of his best. Last year he purchased the ancient abbey of Saint Wandrille, in Normandy. This historic retreat was in ruins, but the poet set about having the place repaired, so that he can entertain his friends amid picturesque surroundings.

REAL GRIEVANCE.



"Boo-hoo! Johnny Jones has got de measles, an' can't come out." "Ah! And you miss your dear little playmate?" "Yis-m, he's de only kid in the town dat I kin hick—boo-hoo-o!"

INTOLERABLE ITCHING.

Fearful Eczema All Over Baby's Face—Professional Treatment Failed.

A Perfect Cure by Cuticura.

"When my little girl was six months old I noticed small red spots on her right cheek. They grew so large that I sent for the doctor but, instead of helping the eruption, his ointment seemed to make it worse. Then I went to a second doctor who said it was eczema. He also gave me an ointment which did not help either. The disease spread all over the face and the eyes began to swell. The itching grew intolerable and it was a terrible sight to see. I consulted doctors for months, but they were unable to cure the baby. I paid out from \$20 to \$30 without relief. One evening I began to use the Cuticura Remedies. The next morning the baby's face was all white instead of red. I continued until the eczema entirely disappeared. Mrs. P. E. Gumbin, Sheldon, Ia., July 13, '08." Potter Drug & Chem. Corp., Sole Props., Boston.

Youthful Confidence.

There is a period in every child's life when he feels himself master of some profession. A little boy of this particular age—10 years old—was noted making great efforts at his drawing.

"What are you drawing, dear?" his mother asked him. "A picture of God," was his ready reply.

"But, my dear, no one knows just what God looks like," said the mother softly and with an air of reproach. "They will after they see this," confidently answered this young prodigy.

Wise Kid.

My seven-year-old niece—writes a correspondent—is an up-to-date young woman. She has a passion for study, and thinks of little but her lessons. The other day I remonstrated with her.

"Lila," I said, "you are working too hard. Why do you do it?" "Well, auntie," she answered, gravely, "I heard somebody say that the education of a child should begin with its grandmother. And I expect to be a grandmother, some day."

Beware of Ointments for Catarrh that Contain Mercury.

As mercury will surely destroy the sense of smell and completely derange the whole system when entering it through the mucous surfaces. Such articles should never be used except on prescription from reputable physicians, as the damage they will do is too told to the good you can possibly derive from them. Hall's Catarrh Cure, manufactured by F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio, contains no mercury, and is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. In buying Hall's Catarrh Cure be sure you get the genuine. It is taken internally and made in Toledo, Ohio, by F. J. Cheney & Co., Testimonials free. Send for Druggists' Price, 10c. per bottle. Take Hall's Family Pills for constipation.

Meteors Add to Earth's Weight.

The meteors which fall upon the earth in vast numbers every year add their weight to the earth. Thus the earth is increasing a minute quantity in weight each year, but not enough to be perceptible in thousands of years. Except for the escape of light gases from the atmosphere there is no known way in which the earth can lose weight.

Starch, like everything else, is being constantly improved, the patent starches put on the market 25 years ago are very different and inferior to those of the present day. In the latest discovery—Defiance Starch—all injurious chemicals are omitted, while the addition of another ingredient, invented by us, gives to the Starch a strength and smoothness never approached by other brands.

Too Much for Mamma.

"What's the matter with your eye, Tommie?" "The boy next door struck me, mamma." "What for, pray?" "He said I struck him first." "And did you?" "No; honest, I didn't, mamma!" "Well, why didn't you?"

Important to Mothers.

Examine carefully every bottle of CASTORIA, a safe and sure remedy for infants and children, and see that it bears the Signature of *W. D. Hoag*. In Use For Over 30 Years. The Kind You Have Always Bought.

Rain or Shine.

Small Wallace accepted an invitation to a party, as follows: "Dear Louise—I will come to your party if it don't rain" (then thinking that he might have to stay home in that case)—"and if it does."—The Delinquent.

By following the directions, which are plainly printed on each package of Defiance Starch, Men's Collars and Cuffs can be made just as stiff as desired, with either gloss or domestic finish. Try it, 16 oz. for 10c, sold by all good grocers.

About Right.

Griggs—What makes you think Peter gets \$5,000 a year? Griggs—Well, he told me he got \$20,000.—New York Herald.

ONLY ONE "BROMO QUININE"

That is LAXATIVE BROMO QUININE. Look for the signature of W. D. Hoag. Use the World over to Cure a Cold in One Day. See.

It is better to begin late doing our duty than never.—Dionysius.

Lewis' Single Binder Cigar has a rich taste. Your dealer or Lewis' Factory, Peoria, Ill.

He isn't much of a baker who eats all the bread he kneads.